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APPRAISALS—"EXPERTISING"

The "Art News" is not a dealer in art or literary property but deals with the dealer and to the advantage of both owner and dealer. Our Bureau of "Expertising and Appraisal" has conducted some most important appraisals.

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TO "CARRY ON"

With the sudden death of James Bliss Townsend last week the AMERICAN ART NEWS has suffered a tremendous loss.

For Mr. Townsend was more than an editor—he was the guiding spirit of the paper. To his energy and unbounded enthusiasm is due the success of the AMERICAN ART NEWS and the position it holds in the art world today.

From the first moment, back in 1904, when he acquired the AMERICAN ART NEWS, he threw his tremendous vitality into developing a frank, fearless organ, which would best represent the interests of the artists and the art dealers and serve as a medium to express their views. That he succeeded, in spite of many difficulties, in fulfilling his object is self-evident; as America's only art newspaper the AMERICAN ART NEWS has come to be recognized and relied upon as an authority both here and abroad. It will be hard, if not impossible, to replace Mr. Townsend. Few persons, if any, had a more intimate knowledge of art matters than he. Yet in their long and close association with him the members of his staff imbibed his views thoroughly. We will endeavor to carry out his policies and wishes so that the AMERICAN ART NEWS may continue to be the frank, fearless organ that it was under his direction.

Reginald T. Townsend.

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:

To say I was shocked, but faintly expresses my feelings, as Mr. Townsend left the galleries last Wed. aft. in apparently perfect physical condition.

For a number of years I have considered Mr. Townsend one of my very dear and best friends. Hardly a week passed by, when he was in the city, that he did not stop in to see me, if only for a few moments. His visits were always amongst the happiest hours spent by me. I certainly have lost a dear friend and one whom I will miss, very, very much.

In addition to my personal loss, the art world in America has lost one of its most potent factors and one whom it will be impossible to replace. Mr. Townsend had a wonderful love for all that was beautiful and was absolutely sound in his views and expressions regarding art. Perhaps as fine an article as he has ever written, was his editorial in the Art News issue of March 5th, entitled "Free Speech in Art."

Charles E. Heney,

(Proprietor Arlington Galleries).

274 Madison Ave., N. Y.,

APPRECIATIONS

(Continued from Page 1)

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:

I am so shocked to read of the death of Mr. Townsend. Though I knew him so slightly, he was so charmingly sympathetic to me and my work that I feel that I have lost a friend.

Maud Earl.

Ritz-Carlton Hotel, N. Y.,

Editor AMERICAN ART NEWS:

The passing away of Mr. J. B. Townsend is a sad blow to the art world, and particularly to his subscribers.

I hope that you may be able to continue the publication of the AMERICAN ART NEWS, in which the aggressive and fair criticisms of Mr. J. B. Townsend will survive him.

Prosper Guerry.

360 W. 55 St., N. Y. C.

OBITUARY

Charles J. McDonough

Charles J. McDonough, well-known dealer, for a number of years occupying galleries in Astor Court, W. 34 St., died suddenly of heart disease, March 14. He was considered one of the best connoisseurs of art in the country, and his advice was sought by the greatest collectors and many dealers in America. He was of kindly nature and much respected, and his death is a distinct loss to the American art world as well as to many European establishments, which placed decided faith in his judgment.

Alexander Roche, Painter

Alexander Roche, painter, died in Edinburgh, Scotland, March 10. He was born in Glasgow in 1861, studied art in Paris and painted all sorts of subjects, landscape and figure. His paintings at various times won medals at Munich, Paris, Pittsburgh and other exhibitions.

Theodore Bissegger

Theodore Bissegger, an accomplished Swiss watercolorist, whose collection of paintings are at present being shown at the gallery of Doll & Richards, Newbury St., died on March 5 in Winterthur, Switzerland, according to a cable received by Dr. Alfred Worcester of Waltham, Mass.

Harry E. Sylvester

Harry E. Sylvester, 61, painter and wood engraver, of Malden, Mass., died Feb. 22 in a private hospital in Boston. He is survived by his daughter, Mrs. Harry C. Arnold, of Stoneham.

Comte Robert de Lasteyrie

A celebrated writer on subjects of archaeological and artistic importance was the Comte Robert de Lasteyrie, who died on Jan. 29. Born in 1849 he was a member of the Académie des Inscriptions, and professor at the Ecole des Chartes. He had fought in the 1870 war where he had won the Legion of Honor and had at one time acted as deputy for his department. His books include "Études sur la Sculpture Française au Moyen Age"; "Histoire de l'Architecture Religieuse en France l'époque Romane"; "Miniatures d'André Beauneveu et de Jacquemart de Hesdin."

LONDON LETTER

London, Feb. 24, 1921.

In the exhibition which reopened at the Grosvenor Galleries most of the leading spirits in modern art are represented. J. S. Sargent sends an admirable portrait of Mrs. Leopold Hirsch. Mrs. Laura Knight contributes another series on the Russian Ballet. Sir W. Orpen is not so convincing as he might be in his war compositions, though his technique could not be more able. C. J. Holmes' landscapes are among the most entirely successful works in the exhibition. And Gerald Kelly's portraits are solidly painted and cleverly conceived.

Perhaps H. M. Bateman is not a great humorous artist. Perhaps his drawings are somewhat akin to the funny pictures of naughty schoolboys. However this may be, his exhibition at the Leicester Galleries is so irresistible that they move one to open laughter. Mr. Bateman keeps away from politics and economics and devotes himself to the simple and delightful task of making nonsense.

The Salesrooms

Duveen's recently paid at Christie's 3,000 guineas for a Louis XV library table, and Frank Partridge 600 guineas for a pair of Directoire candelabra of ormolu and bronze. A portrait of Washington by Stuart sold for 1,500 guineas.

PARIS LETTER

March 5, 1921.

To electric light undoubtedly are due certain modern color schemes. Without electricity we should assuredly not have had Van Dongen (showing some 40 almost entirely new pictures at Bernheim Jeune's) as we know him. It has so influenced his vision that his optical sense is changed when he looks at nature. And this is "all to the good," in his case. The eye retains echoes, as it were, and the aspect of things varies according to previous experience. A season in the tropics will change a painter's vision as well as his palette. And this is not only due to memory—a new sense of relations is awakened.

As other painters go in for the picturesque, so Van Dongen goes in for the fashionable. Frocks from the Rue de la Paix interest him more than peasants' costumes, and "painted ladies" strike him as being as expressive as withered old women. He is to our modern times what Watteau and Fragonard, Nattier and La Tour were to the XVIII C. His studio is in the "West End," and the morning mist in the Avenue du Bois is as appealing to him as the Chelsea Embankment was to Whistler.

Van Dongen is one of our greatest living masters. There is no other alive today about whom so much could be said. Every one of his pictures opens possibilities for comment.

The exhibition contains just enough older work to show how he has evolved of late. His painting has become gradually fuller. Instead, as is often the case, of being increasingly satisfied, Van Dongen has become more exacting with himself.

No painter, except Matisse, has been so daring—I mean painters who still resort to life for inspiration and are interested in rendering it; who, in fact, as Van Dongen obviously does, enjoy its aspects and seek to reveal what is hidden behind appearances. Van Dongen repeats no one and nothing, not even himself. Each picture is a surprise, and if you want an antithesis to a pedant, that antithesis is Van Dongen. Some people think that he is joking. So he may be at times, but there can be more earnestness in a joke than in the most serious remarks. His frivolity is very much of the nature of Whistler's, as when he (Van Dongen) paints those two tiny children (whom he calls "Adam et Eve") alone on a huge beach (Van Dongen has an astounding recipe for painting sand, up against the sea, overhanging by the most delicate of skies, an astonishing feat) or, to mention another humorous theme, when he represents a lady dining at a restaurant table, a dress suit by her side, without head and hands. But then, in such pictures he is much more serious than formerly, when he painted an allegorical nude woman on the Egyptian pattern, accompanied by an ewe with a dove perched on its head. And I am again reminded of Whistler in the picture entitled "Fille au Piano," the instrument, a "grand," with a lamp on it, painted in full, the figure of the little executant just discernible behind. But if the sentiment is analogous, the skill is infinitely greater. Whistler could not compass movement such as is found in "Cette Enfant qui Court." But how enchanted the "Master" would have been had he painted "Baigneuse," a smaller picture of a woman wrapped in a mauve peignoir. A jewel this.

As a painter of physiognomy Van Dongen belongs to the type of painter influenced by the modern craze for caricature. It is not ugly caricature—far from it, the exaggeration is in the other direction—but he has a convention, and the mask assumed by the woman of fashion, symbol of an age and a class, is sufficient psychological material for him. In this sense he is an impressionist in the fullest sense of the word.

Manguin and de Waroquier

Were he not their contemporary, one might suppose that Henri Manguin (showing at Druet's) was the pupil or at least the disciple of Matisse and Van Dongen. But his work is more weighted, more concentrated than theirs. He has wonderful chromatic resources, and his large still-lives of Southern fruits in open windows against a background of Mediterranean coast, sea and sky, are magnificent feats.

At the same gallery Henry de Waroquier shows Alpine and Corsican landscapes, done in Chinese ink and watercolor, which, though entirely modern, bring the XVII C. painter, Hubert-Robert, to mind. M. de Waroquier's work always distinguishes itself from among its neighbors at the salons for the peculiar decorative aspect and fine drawing.

Deluermoz, Animal Painter

A very fine animal painter is H. Deluermoz, showing at Reitlinger's, 12 Rue La Boetie. There is much of Delacroix's spirit in, especially, his smaller paintings—those taken directly from life or painted under a momentary impulse. His very competent drawings and monotypes of individual animals recall Barye. His mood as well as his palette are attuned to the environment in which his subjects are placed. In Spain and Provence his color is rich and warm, his drawing vivacious; in Brittany and Savoy he is more calm and composed, sometimes almost sad. Brilliant and full of enthusiasm are his pictures of red Indians and cowboys.

Etudes de la Femme

"Quelques Etudes de la Femme" ought to reveal at least some pleasant work (Devambez). But this was far from the case. With the exception of some crayon drawings by Drian, touched almost as Watteau might have, there was little representative of feminine charm. Capiello, for instance, proved that it no more follows that a great designer of posters makes a good painter than a good painter necessarily makes a good designer of posters.

Anent Archipenko

On Feb. 12, your paper quoted the N. Y. Herald in calling Archipenko, "the latest sensation in Europe."

"The latest sensation," absolutely not! As old as houses in Paris! Exhibited at Independents years before the war. Sensation—if ever there was one—quite worn off. Can't raise an eyebrow. As old as Bouguereau. "Nothing is so out-of-date as the 'modern'" (that kind of "modern") says a wag. And Archipenko is not "young" any more.

Concerning Monet

The French daily, Le Temps, tells the story of the beautiful "Femmes dans le Jardin," by Claude Monet, which the French Counsel of National Museums has just acquired from the great artist for 200,000 francs. It was the first time a painter studied the play of light on figures in the open air, and this audacity meant that the Salon jury was to refuse to hang it. So Monet displayed it in a dealer's shop in the Rue Auber. Here it thoroughly shocked everyone, including Manet, who three years later was to become Monet's fervent disciple. "Can you imagine," he was heard to say to his friends at the Café de Bade, "that a young beginner has dared to make a painting of figures in the open without tricks or concessions, attempting to render the facts as he sees them? Has such a thing ever been seen? The old masters did not do that. And how right they were!" M. Claude Monet tells the anecdote himself.

The beautiful picture, which shows four crinolined ladies, one of whom is Mme. Monet, in a garden, was at the painter's studio at Giverny when M. Paul Léon, Director of Fine Arts, wanted to buy it. As the great turning-point in the evolution of painting it deserved, he thought, to belong to the nation. The sum, stipulated by M. Monet himself, was raised partly from among the State funds, partly by private subscription.

The same committee has just acquired a picture by M. Raffaelli, "Le Veuf." The price paid was 20,000 francs.

Notes

Recent promotions in the Legion of Honor: M. Adrien-A. Hébrard, the well-known founder, and owner of the Galerie Hébrard in the Rue Royale, Paris; M. Capiello, the brilliant poster-designer—both promoted from chevaliers to officers. And it must not be forgotten, as a witty contemporary points out, that Sarah Bernhardt, similarly honored, in her time has gone in for sculpture.

An exhibition of Polish art will take place at the Grand Palais from April 13.

At about the same time the Musée Galliera will hold a display of clockmakers' work and jewelry.

Until now Lyon had no historical museum. One is now being fitted in the former Hôtel de Gadagne and it is hoped it will be ready for Easter.

M. C.